United Nations

A/51/405

General Assembly
Fifty-first session

Distr.: General

25 September 1996
Original: English

Agenda item 123 (a)

Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East: United Nations Disengagement Observer Force

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains the financial performance report of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) for the period from 1 December 1994 to 30 November 1995. The expenditures for the period amount to $30,928,300 gross ($30,158,900 net), resulting in an unencumbered balance of $1,202,700 gross ($973,100 net).

The action to be taken by the General Assembly as contained in paragraph 11 of the report is a decision to credit Member States their respective share in the unencumbered balance of $1,202,700 gross ($973,100 net) for the period from 1 December 1994 to 30 November 1995.

96-25536 (E) 241096

291096

Contents

		Paragraphs	*Page*
I.	Introduction	1 - 2	3
II.	Financial performance report for the period from 1 December 1994 to 30 November 1995	3 - 8	3
III.	Financial administration	9 - 10	4
	A. Resources made available and operating costs from inception to 30 November 1996	9	4
	B. Status of assessed contributions	10	4
IV.	Action to be taken by the General Assembly at its fifty-first session	11	4

Annexes

I.	Financial performance report for the period from 1 December 1994 to 30 November 1995: summary statement	5
II.	Financial performance report for the period from 1 December 1994 to 30 November 1995: supplementary information	9
III.	Authorized staffing, incumbency and vacancy rates for the period from 1 December 1994 to 30 November 1995	18
IV.	Resources made available and operating costs for the period from inception to 30 November 1996 as at 15 September 1996	20

I. Introduction

1. The Security Council, by its resolution 1057 (1996) of 30 May 1996, extended the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) to 30 November 1996.

2. The financial provision for the period from 1 December 1994 to 30 November 1995 to maintain the operation of UNDOF was approved by the General Assembly in its resolutions 49/225 of 23 December 1994 and 50/20 of 1 December 1995, which appropriated to the Special Account for UNDOF the amounts of 16,065,500 gross ($15,566,000 net) and $16,065,498 gross ($15,564,000 net) for the periods from 1 December 1994 to 31 May 1995 and from 1 June to 30 November 1995, respectively, and apportioned the same amounts among Member States.

II. Financial performance report for the period from 1 December 1994 to 30 November 1995

3. Annex I, column 1, sets out by budget line item the cost estimates for maintaining UNDOF for the period from 1 December 1994 to 30 November 1995, as contained in annex III to the report of the Secretary-General of 20 October 1994 (A/49/553). The cost estimates reflect the apportionment of the resources provided to UNDOF during the period since the Secretary-General's proposals were approved without change. The expenditures recorded for the period are shown in column 2 by budget line item. Savings or overruns, which reflect differences between the apportionment of resources and the actual expenditures, are shown in column 3 and result in an unencumbered balance of $1,202,700 gross ($973,100 net).

4. Supplementary information on the financial performance report is presented by budget line item in annex II. The authorized staffing, incumbency and vacancy rates for civilian and military personnel for the reporting period are shown in annex III.

5. As shown in annex I, column 1, the total resources made available to UNDOF for the period from 1 December 1994 to 30 November 1995 amount to $32,131,000 gross ($31,132,000 net). Expenditures for the period (column 2) amount to $30,928,300 gross ($30,158,900 net).

6. The expenditures incurred during the reporting period for the following main budget headings were less than their estimated costs and resulted in total savings of $1,202,700 gross ($973,100 net) as follows: military personnel costs ($384,200), premises and accommodation ($88,700), transport operations ($332,800), communications ($22,600), other equipment ($250,500), supplies and services ($162,500) and staff assessment ($229,600).

7. The above savings were realized mainly as a result of more favourable rates for the hire of aircraft used for rotation of military personnel; receipt of additional vehicles, equipment and supplies from other missions; cancellation and deferment of maintenance projects as part of the special measures taken in relation to the bad financial situation in the United Nations; and the reduced prices offered by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic for petrol, oil and other lubricants.

8. However, additional requirements of $282,700 were incurred above the original estimates for civilian personnel costs, offsetting in part the savings mentioned in the preceding paragraph, thus resulting in an overall unencumbered balance of $1,202,700 gross ($973,100 net). The additional requirements under civilian personnel costs were due mainly to the higher than estimated costs for staff in the Field Service category.

III. Financial administration

A. Resources made available and operating costs from inception to 30 November 1996

9. As at 15 September 1996, total resources made available to the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF)/UNDOF from inception to 30 November 1996 amounted to $1,148.8 million (gross). This amount includes credits of $19.2 million returned to Member States. The total estimated expenditures amount to $1,128.4 million (gross). There is an unencumbered balance of $1,202,700 gross ($973,100 net) for the period from 1 December 1994 to 30 November 1995. Detailed information is presented in annex IV.

B. Status of assessed contributions

10. Amounts totalling $1,132.3 million in respect of UNDOF and UNEF have been assessed on Member States for the period from inception to 30 November 1996. Contributions received as at 15 September 1996 for the same period amounted to $1,061.2 million. In addition, outstanding assessments were reduced by an amount of $4.2 million pursuant to General Assembly resolution 50/83 of 15 December 1995. The outstanding balance of $71.1 million includes an amount of $36 million transferred to a special account in accordance with General Assembly resolution 36/116 A of 10 December 1981.

IV. Action to be taken by the General Assembly at its fifty-first session

11. The action to be taken by the General Assembly at its fifty-first session in connection with the financing of UNDOF is a decision to credit Member States their respective share in the unencumbered balance of $1,202,700 gross ($973,100 net) for the period from 1 December 1994 to 30 November 1995.

Annex I
Financial performance report for the period from 1 December 1994 to 30 November 1995: summary statement

		Cost estimate and apportionment (1)	*Expenditure (2)*	*Savings/ (overrun) (3)=(1)-(2)*
1.	**Military personnel costs**			
	(a) Military observers	—	—	—
	(b) Military contingents			
	Standard troop cost reimbursement	12 825.0	12 825.0	—
	Welfare	226.0	249.0	(23.0)
	Rations	2 187.0	2 255.8	(68.8)
	Daily allowance	486.0	486.0	—
	Mission subsistence allowance	—	—	—
	Travel and subsistence allowance	91.0	91.0	—
	Emplacement, rotation and repatriation of troops	1 339.0	863.0	476.0
	Clothing and equipment allowance	875.0	875.0	—
	Subtotal	**18 029.0**	**17 644.8**	**384.2**
	(c) Other costs pertaining to military contingents			
	Contingent-owned equipment	155.0	155.0	—
	Death and disability compensation	300.0	300.0	—
	Subtotal	**455.0**	**455.0**	**—**
	Total, line 1	**18 484.0**	**18 099.8**	**384.2**
2.	**Civilian personnel costs**			
	(a) Civilian police	—	—	—
	(b) International and local staff			
	International staff salaries	1 831.0	2 141.1	(310.1)
	Local staff salaries	1 092.0	890.3	201.7
	Consultants	—	—	—
	General temporary assistance	100.0	138.2	(38.2)
	Overtime	60.0	60.0	—
	Common staff costs	1 860.0	2 016.2	(156.2)
	Mission subsistence allowance	—	—	—
	Other travel costs	60.0	39.9	20.1
	Subtotal	**5 003.0**	**5 285.7**	**(282.7)**

		Cost estimate and apportionment (1)	*Expenditure (2)*	*Savings/ (overrun) (3) = (1)-(2)*
	(c) International contractual personnel	—	—	—
	(d) United Nations Volunteers	—	—	—
	(e) Government-provided personnel	—	—	—
	(f) Civilian electoral observers	—	—	—
	Total, line 2	**5 003.0**	**5 285.7**	**(282.7)**
3.	**Premises/accommodation**			
	Rental of premises	17.0	32.6	(15.6)
	Alteration and renovation of premises	—	—	—
	Maintenance supplies	513.0	451.4	61.6
	Maintenance services	286.0	344.9	(58.9)
	Utilities	219.0	224.0	(5.0)
	Construction/prefabricated buildings	463.0	356.4	106.6
	Total, line 3	**1 498.0**	**1 409.3**	**88.7**
4.	**Infrastructure repairs**	—	—	—
5.	**Transport operations**			
	Purchase of vehicles	592.0	394.6	197.4
	Rental of vehicles	—	—	—
	Workshop equipment	30.0	24.1	5.9
	Spare parts, repairs and maintenance	792.0	713.1	78.9
	Petrol, oil and lubricants	1 188.0	1 137.4	50.6
	Vehicle insurance	163.0	163.0	—
	Total, line 5	**2 765.0**	**2 432.2**	**332.8**
6.	**Air operations**	—	—	—
7.	**Naval operations**	—	—	—
8.	**Communications**			
	(a) Complementary communications			
	Communications equipment	300.0	210.3	89.7
	Spare parts and supplies	250.0	355.8	(105.8)
	Workshop and test equipment	75.0	23.9	51.1
	Commercial communications	33.0	45.4	(12.4)
	Subtotal	**658.0**	**635.4**	**22.6**
	(b) Main trunking contract	—	—	—
	Total, line 8	**658.0**	**635.4**	**22.6**
9.	**Other equipment**			
	Office furniture	94.0	74.1	19.9
	Office equipment	—	—	—
	Data processing equipment	—	—	—
	Generators	88.0	60.0	28.0
	Observation equipment	119.0	43.4	75.6
	Petrol tank plus metering equipment	—	—	—
	Water and septic tanks	—	—	—

	Cost estimate and apportionment (1)	*Expenditure (2)*	*Savings/ (overrun) (3)=(1)-(2)*
Medical and dental equipment	78.0	11.4	66.6
Accommodation equipment	94.0	93.2	0.8
Miscellaneous equipment	53.0	77.7	(24.7)
Field defence equipment	—	—	—
Water-purification equipment	—	—	—
Refrigeration equipment	—	—	—
Spare parts, repairs and maintenance	258.0	173.7	84.3
Total, line 9	**784.0**	**533.5**	**250.5**
10. Supplies and services			
(a) Miscellaneous services			
Audit services	16.0	16.0	—
Contractual services	164.0	154.6	9.4
Data-processing services	—	—	—
Security services	—	—	—
Medical treatment and services	80.0	80.0	—
Claims and adjustments	—	—	—
Official hospitality	—	—	—
Miscellaneous other services	67.0	74.6	(7.6)
Subtotal	**327.0**	**325.2**	**1.8**
(b) Miscellaneous supplies			
Stationery/office supplies	120.0	117.6	2.4
Medical supplies	120.0	130.9	(10.9)
Sanitation and cleaning materials	75.0	67.6	7.4
Subscriptions	—	—	—
Electrical supplies	—	—	—
Ballistic-protective blankets for vehicles	—	—	—
Uniform items, flags and decals	122.0	53.3	68.7
Field defence stores	25.0	19.0	6.0
Operational maps	—	—	—
Quartermaster and general stores	550.0	462.9	87.1
Miscellaneous supplies	—	—	—
Subtotal	**1 012.0**	**851.3**	**160.7**
Total, line 10	**1 339.0**	**1 176.5**	**162.5**
11. Election-related supplies and services	—	—	—
12. Public information programmes	—	—	—
13. Training programmes	—	—	—
14. Mine-clearing programmes	—	—	—
15. Assistance for disarmament and demobilization	—	—	—

	Cost estimate and apportionment (1)	*Expenditure (2)*	*Savings/ (overrun) (3)=(1)-(2)*
16. Air and surface freight			
Transport of contingent-owned equipment	—	—	—
Military airlifts	—	—	—
Commercial freight and cartage	160.0	145.5	14.5
Total, line 16	**160.0**	**145.5**	**14.5**
17. Integrated Management Information System	**31.0**	**31.0**	**—**
18. Support account for peacekeeping operations	**425.0**	**425.0**	**—**
19. Staff assessment	**984.0**	**754.4**	**229.6**
Total, lines 1-19	**32 131.0**	**30 928.3**	**1 202.7**
20. Income			
Staff assessment	(984.0)	(754.4)	(229.6)
Other	(15.0)	(15.0)	—
Total, line 20	**(999.0)**	**(769.4)**	**(229.6)**
21. Voluntary contributions in kind (budgeted)	**—**	**—**	**—**
Total, lines 19-21	**31 132.0**	**30 158.9**	**973.1**
Gross requirements	32 131.0	30 928.3	1 202.7
Net requirements	31 132.0	30 158.9	973.1
22. Voluntary contributions in kind (non-budgeted)	**—**	**—**	**—**
Total resources	**31 132.0**	**30 158.9**	**973.1**

Annex II
Financial performance report for the period from 1 December 1994 to 30 November 1995: supplementary information

Savings/(overrun)
(United States dollars)

1. Military personnel costs

(a) Military observers 384 200

1. No provision was made under this heading.

(b) Military contingents 384 200

2. Savings under emplacement, rotation and repatriation of troops ($476,000) was offset in part by additional requirements under welfare ($23,000) and rations ($68,800). The savings under emplacement, rotation and repatriation of troops were due to more favourable rates charged for both commercial and government aircraft.

3. The overexpenditure under welfare was due to the purchase of satellite dishes with receivers following the relocation of UNDOF headquarters and the Canadian contingent detachment to Camp Faouar. The satellite dishes with receivers were procured to equip all positions in the areas of limitation and most houses in Camp Faouar.

4. Provision for rations had originally been made for the approved strength of 1,036 personnel for 365 days at a cost of $5.50 per person per day, plus an overlap factor of 0.5 per cent and extra rations for holidays. This rate was based on the ceiling person/day rate of $4.51 as stipulated in the contract agreement between UNDOF and Services & Supply International, the company that provided frozen and dry rations to UNDOF. In addition, the rate of $5.50 included an amount of $0.99 per person per day for the supply of fresh produce, bread, eggs, dairy products and bottled mineral water. Actual expenditures for the purchase of these items averaged $1.44 per person per day due to unstable prices of fruits and vegetables in Israel as a result of inclement weather and the need to purchase requisite stocks of rations for emergency situations. A summary of estimated and actual costs for rations is given in table 1 below.

Table 1 **Rations**

Description	*Costs*	*Total*
Budgeted		
Rations ($5.50/person/day x 361,521 person/days)	1 988 300	
Freight	198 700	
Total		**2 187 000**
Less actually expended		
Services & Supply International contract ($4.51/person/day x 379,199 person/days)	1 710 200	
Local market ($1.44/person/day x 379,199 person/days)	545 600	
Total		**2 255 800**
Overrun		**(68 800)**

(c) Other costs pertaining to military contingents . . . . . —

(i) Contingent-owned equipment . . . . . —

5. The amount allocated for contingent-owned equipment has been fully obligated to cover potential claims.

(ii) Death and disability compensation . . . . . —

6. The amount allocated has been obligated to cover potential claims for death, injury or disability of military personnel.

2. Civilian personnel costs . . . . . (282 700)

(a) Civilian police . . . . . —

7. No provision was made under this heading.

(b) International and local staff . . . . . (282 700)

8. The overexpenditure under this heading was the result of higher requirements for international staff salaries ($310,100), general temporary assistance ($38,200) and common staff costs ($156,200). This was offset by savings amounting to $221,800 under local staff salaries ($201,700), which was attributed to actual salaries being lower than budgeted, and other travel costs ($20,100), owing to restrictions imposed on official travel.

9. The cost estimate for the salaries of staff in the New York Field Service category was based on the FS-4 level, step 5, while the average level of the incumbents was FS-5, step 3.

Table 2 **Comparison of actual and budget level: Field Service**

	Staff on board	*Budgeted*
Field Service		
FS-7	1	
FS-6	5	
FS-5	6	
FS-4	7	
FS-3	5	
Total	**24**	**25**
Average level	**FS-5**	**FS-4**

10. An overrun in common staff costs resulted in part from the lower estimates for the Field Service category and in part from the reclassification of UNDOF headquarters from an "A" to a "B" duty station effective 1 July 1994 in connection with its relocation from Damascus to Camp Faouar, which resulted in an additional payment for mobility and hardship allowance to international civilian staff. The reclassification of UNDOF headquarters from an "A" to "B" duty station was based on a review undertaken by the Office of Human Resources Management on the conditions of life and work in Camp Faouar. Mobility and hardship allowance was approved by the General Assembly in section I (E) of its resolution 44/198 of 21 December 1989. The mobility and hardship allowance includes three elements: (a) an amount that reflects the varying degrees of hardship at different duty stations; (b) an amount that varies according to

the number of assignments or transfers to different duty stations and thus takes into account and provides incentives for mobility; and (c) an amount that compensates the staff member for the absence of an entitlement to removal of household goods.

11. For duty stations in category "A", the hardship element is not payable. The hardship element is payable from the first assignment of staff at duty stations designated in categories "B" to "E", provided that they meet the general conditions of eligibility for the allowance.

12. In the case of UNDOF, as a result of relocation of the UNDOF headquarters from Damascus to Camp Faouar, all international staff in the Professional category and above were paid the mobility and hardship allowance at hardship category "B" level, owing to the hardship element, which changed from category "A" to "B". The relocation has no effect on the element for mobility and the element for non-removal.

13. Additional requirements under general temporary assistance were due to the recruitment of eight staff members at the Local level, each for a period of eight months at a rate of $590 per month, as replacement for staff who were temporarily assigned to other missions. The replacement staff included a senior car painter, senior mechanic, procurement clerk, secretary and generator mechanic.

3. Premises/accommodation 88 700

14. Savings totalling $168,200 from maintenance supplies ($61,600) and construction/prefabricated buildings ($106,600) were offset in part by additional requirements of $79,500 for rental of premises ($15,600), maintenance services ($58,900) and utilities ($5,000).

15. When UNDOF transferred its headquarters to Camp Faouar, all construction efforts were concentrated on the completion of the new headquarters building and renovations of existing structures. These projects and other repair work delayed the transfer of the transport workshop from Moadamieh to Camp Faouar since storage facilities were not available in Camp Faouar. This resulted in the renewal of the lease of the Moadamieh transport workshop for the period from 1 December 1994 to 31 March 1995, for which no provision had been included.

16. Table 3 shows the breakdown of the budgeted amount and the actual expenditure incurred during the reporting period.

Table 3 **Rental of premises**

Description	*Cost estimate*	*Actual cost*
	(United States dollars)	
Quebec house No. 1	1 500	1 314
Quebec house No. 2	550	448
Sewage disposal place	600	376
Garbage disposal place	800	752
Garage in Tiberias	8 400	7 538
Moadamieh transport workshop	—	10 134
Utilities for rented premises	5 150	12 000
Total	**17 000**	**32 562**

17. The overexpenditure amounting to $58,900 for maintenance services was the result of increased requirements in the rental of heavy-duty equipment for completion of projects and for major improvements in the water and heating systems in the mission area. Table 4 lists the projects requiring the rental of heavy-duty equipment and information on the types, costs and quantities of heavy equipment rented for each project.

Table 4 **Rental of heavy-duty equipment**

Description	*Description of service*	*Cost (United States dollars)*
1. Construction of a road for a new Position 80 Polish battalion	Rental of dump trucks to transport 2,282 m^3 of gravel	27 881
2. Upgrading the road to Position 17 Austrian battalion	Rental of a bulldozer, dump trucks, grader and front-end loader	31 000
Total		**58 881**

18. The overrun under utilities was due to an increase of 4.7 per cent in electricity rates.

19. The reduced requirement for maintenance supplies resulted from the use of locally available material for the projects undertaken by military contingents and from the non-replenishment of second-line stocks of construction materials. In addition, the construction projects listed below were cancelled or deferred to the following year.

Table 5 **Cancelled and deferred projects under maintenance supplies**

Cancelled projects
(a) Construction of an operations bunker at UNDOF headquarters
(b) Extension of the accommodation building at Position 10
(c) Renovation of building 149 at Camp Faouar
Deferred projects
(a) Upgrading of sewer lines in Camps Faouar and Ziouani (commenced in Camp Faouar in 1996)
(b) Renovation of the Polish battalion's kitchens at Position 60 and 80 and in Camp Ziouani (carried out in 1996)
(c) Upgrading of various area of separation positions and camp fences (commenced in Camp Faouar in 1996)
(d) Installation of car wash and water recycling system in Camp Faouar (commenced in 1996)

20. Savings under construction/prefabricated buildings resulted from the deferment of the following projects to the 1995-1996 period.

Table 6 **Deferred projects**

Project
(a) Extension of Austrian battalion building in Position Hermon
(b) Renovation of Polish battalion building 247 in Camp Ziouani
(c) Renovation of laboratory in Camp Faouar
(d) Central heating system in Canadian contingent building 323 in Camp Ziouani

4. Infrastructure repairs . . . . . —

21. No provision was made under this heading.

5. Transport operations 332 800

22. Total savings of $332,800 resulted under purchase of vehicles ($197,400), workshop equipment ($5,900), spare parts, repairs and maintenance ($78,900) and petrol, oil and lubricants ($50,600). Savings under purchase of vehicles was due to the transfer of vehicles from the United Nations Logistics Base, Brindisi. A breakdown of vehicles budgeted and vehicles received from the Base during the reporting period is shown in table 7.

Table 7 **Vehicles acquired on 30 August 1995**

Type	*Budgeted*	*Received*
Sedan, light	—	7
Bus, medium	—	2
Truck, pick-up	—	4
Truck, utility	—	20
Truck, cargo	5	51*
Truck, fuel	—	6
Truck, refrigerator	2	—
Truck, crane	—	4
Truck, water	—	12
Truck, fire	—	4
Truck, sewage	—	2
Truck, dump	—	3
Grader, caterpillar	—	2
Fork-lift	—	4
Total	**7**	**121**

* The vehicles received from the United Nations Logistics Base are over 15 years old and cannot be used in the northern area of separation. Their transfer to the mission area is only an interim solution to the UNDOF vehicle replacement programme.

23. A breakdown of expenditures under purchase of vehicles is shown in table 8.

Table 8 **Breakdown of expenditures under purchase of vehicles**

Description	*Amount*
Sea transportation of vehicles	320 669
Customs clearing and freight forward	38 052
Repairs, refurbishment and other cost relating to the replacement programme from the United Nations Logistics Base, Brindisi	35 932
Total	**394 600**

24. In February 1994, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic implemented a two-level pricing policy for petroleum products used by the general and private sector.

25. Savings under petrol, oil and lubricants were realized as a result of the unofficial classification of UNDOF under the general sector, pending confirmation by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. This has resulted in UNDOF obtaining petroleum products at the lower general sector rate. A comparison of budgeted and actual costs of petroleum products is shown in table 9.

Table 9 **Estimated versus actual costs of petroleum products**

Description	*Cost estimate*	*Actual cost*
	(United States dollars)	
Gasoline	462 000.00	429 263.58
Diesel fuel	605 000.00	562 130.88
Lubricants	121 000.00	112 429.18
Total	**1 188 000.00**	**1 103 820.64**

26. In addition, reduced requirements for workshop equipment and spare parts, repairs and maintenance were due to the efficient use of existing resources, which resulted in savings under these line items.

6. Air operations . . . . . —

27. No provision was made under this heading.

7. Naval operations . . . . . —

28. No provision was made under this heading.

8. Communications 22 600

(a) Complementary communications 22 600

29. Savings realized under communications equipment ($89,700) and workshop and test equipment ($51,100) were offset by additional requirements for spare parts and supplies ($105,800) and commercial communications ($12,400).

30. Communications equipment transferred from the United Nations Logistics Base, Brindisi, contributed to savings under this heading. Savings of $51,100 under workshop and test equipment were due to the receipt of equipment from the Base, which satisfied some requirements. The list of workshop equipment received is provided in table 10. No test equipment was received.

Table 10 **List of workshop equipment received from the United Nations Logistics Base, Brindisi**

Description	*Quantity*
Radio VHF spectra	40
Radio VHF handi talki	35
Copier, Canon NP-3050	3
Copier, Canon NP-2020	1
Fax machine, Canon T-50	2
Fax machine, Canon T-40	2
Fax machine, Canon L-770	4
Fax machine, Panasonic KX-50	1
Fax machine, Panasonic KX-90	1

31. Owing to delays in raising and processing requisitions for communication spare parts and supplies during the prior mandate period, several items had to be procured during the period under review, which resulted in an overrun under this budget line item. Furthermore, additional requirements resulted from the need for the restocking of second-line items for emergency repairs and maintenance. The overrun under commercial communications was due to the UNDOF share in the satellite transponder lease (effective 1 July 1995), amounting to $10,625 per quarter, for which no budgetary provision had been made.

(b) Main trunking contract . . . . . —

32. No provision was made under this heading.

9. Other equipment 250 500

33. Savings totalling $275,200 under office furniture and equipment ($19,900), generators ($28,000), observation equipment ($75,600), medical and dental equipment ($66,600), accommodation equipment ($800) and spare parts, repairs and maintenance ($84,300) were offset in part by additional requirements under miscellaneous equipment ($24,700).

34. The freeze on expenditures, which delayed the procurement of office furniture and equipment, generators, medical and dental equipment, combined with transfers from the United Nations Logistics Base, Brindisi, accounted for the savings. The replacement of kitchen equipment no longer serviceable and not able to be repaired economically was delayed and resulted in savings under accommodation equipment.

35. Savings of $75,600 under observation equipment were realized owing to the reduced requirement for this item. Only 3 night observation devices and 20 binocular sets were purchased. In addition, savings of $84,300 were realized under spare parts, repairs and maintenance owing to administrative delays.

36. The overexpenditure under miscellaneous equipment was due to the unforeseen requirements for additional shelving for second-line warehouses to prevent losses, damages or misplacement of materials and supplies. Table 11 shows the cost and quantity of additional shelving purchased during the reporting period for second-line warehouse uses.

Table 11 **Cost and quantity of shelving purchases**

Description	*Quantity*	*Unit cost* (United States dollars)	*Total cost*
Upright steel frames	46	80	3 680
Load beams	120	75	9 000
Cross bars	352	10	3 520
Horizontal shelving beam, 169 cm	4	32	128
Horizontal shelving beam, 177 cm	10	33	325
Horizontal shelving beam, 257 cm	14	52	728
Horizontal shelving beam, 273 cm	16	60	952
Steel shelf panels	335	7	2 345
Industrial type shelving unit	100	81	8 143
Supply/install heavy-duty pallet racks	1	18 000	18 000
Total			**46 821**

10. Supplies and services 162 500

(a) Miscellaneous services 1 800

37. The overexpenditure of $7,600 under miscellaneous other services was due to the unforeseen requirement to cover claims for compensation of four lessors of the former UNDOF headquarters building in Damascus for damage and missing items during the UNDOF occupancy. This overrun was offset in part by savings of $9,400 under contractual services, which resulted from the deferment of computer training courses for staff members.

(b) Miscellaneous supplies 160 700

38. Savings totalling $171,600 under stationery and office supplies ($2,400), sanitation and cleaning materials ($7,400), uniform items, flags and decals ($68,700), field defence stores ($6,000) and quartermaster and general stores ($87,100) were offset in part by additional requirements of $10,900 under medical supplies.

39. The savings were due mainly to the implementation of special measures to freeze expenditures in the affected accounts. Without compromising health standards, UNDOF observed the austere use of sanitation and cleaning materials, which contributed to reduced procurement of those items.

40. Savings under uniform items, flags and decals resulted from the reduced requirement for flags, medal sets, United Nations berets, badges and other United Nations accoutrements.

41. An effort to reduce spending by using second-line items in stock in line with the financial situation generated savings under the field defence stores account.

42. Similarly, savings were realized under quartermaster and general stores thanks to a concerted effort to maximize the use of available stores and to limit procurement of additional ones.

43. The urgent and unforeseen need for a defibrillator and other emergency medical equipment for the mine-clearing teams caused the overexpenditure under medical supplies.

11. Election-related supplies and services . . . . . —

12. Public information programmes . . . . . —

13. Training programmes . . . . . —

14. Mine-clearing programmes . . . . . —

15. Assistance for disarmament and demobilization . . . . . —

44. No provisions were made under these headings.

16. Air and surface freight 14 500

45. Savings under this heading were realized because of the reduced procurement of materials and supplies as a result of the implementation of the special measures related to the current financial situation.

17. Integrated Management Information System . . . . . —

46. No change.

18. Support account for peacekeeping operations . . . . . —

47. The amount authorized has been transferred to the support account for peacekeeping operations.

19. Staff assessment 229 600

48. Savings under this heading were due to the lower grade levels of local staff hired in comparison with the cost estimates.

20. Income from staff assessment . . . . . (229 600)

49. This amount is derived from item 19 above.

Annex III
Authorized staffing, incumbency and vacancy rates for the period from 1 December 1994 to 30 November 1995

		1994	1995											
Grade	*Authorized*	*30 Dec*	*31 Jan*	*28 Feb*	*31 March*	*30 April*	*31 May*	*30 June*	*31 July*	*31 Aug*	*30 Sep*	*31 Oct*	*30 Nov*	*Average*
Civilian personnel														
Professional category and above														
ASG	1	—	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
P-5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
P-4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
P-3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	5	**4**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**5**
Vacancy rate (percentage)		20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
General Service and related categories														
Field Service	26	20	20	20	19	19	22	22	22	23	22	23	24	21
General Service (Principal level)		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
General Service (Other level)	5	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	2	2	4
Security Service	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	31	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**27**	**27**	**26**	**27**	**26**	**25**	**26**	**25**
Vacancy rate (percentage)		23	23	23	23	23	13	13	16	13	16	19	16	18
Total, international staff	36	28	29	29	29	29	32	32	31	32	31	30	31	30
Vacancy rate (percentage)		22	19	19	19	19	11	11	14	11	14	17	14	16
Local staff	84	80	79	78	80	80	77	78	78	78	82	81	80	79
Vacancy rate (percentage)	—	5	6	7	5	5	8	7	7	7	2	4	5	6
International contractual personnel	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Vacancy rate (percentage)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total, civilian staff	**120**	**108**	**108**	**107**	**109**	**109**	**109**	**110**	**109**	**110**	**113**	**111**	**111**	**110**
Vacancy rate (percentage)		10	10	11	9	9	9	8	9	8	6	8	8	9

Grade	Authorized	1994 30 Dec	1995 31 Jan	28 Feb	31 March	30 April	31 May	30 June	31 July	31 Aug	30 Sep	31 Oct	30 Nov	Average
Military personnel														
Military contingents	**1 036**	**1 037**	**1 038**	**1 039**	**1 041**	**1 038**	**1 035**	**1 042**	**1 036**	**1 033**	**1 039**	**1 047**	**1 042**	**1 039**
Vacancy rate (percentage)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	-1	—	—	—	-1	-1	—

Annex IV
Resources made available and operating costs for the period from inception to 30 November 1996 as at 15 September 1996

(In millions of United States dollars)

		Gross	Net
A.	**Summary of resources**		
1.	*Resources*		
	Inception to 30 November 1995		
	Appropriations	1 116.6	1 101.0
	1 December 1995 to 31 May 1996		
	Appropriation (resolution 50/20 B)	16.1	15.6
	1 to 30 June 1996		
	Appropriation (resolution 50/20 B)	2.7	2.6
	1 July 1996 to 30 November 1996		
	Appropriation (resolution 50/20 B)	13.4	13.1
	Total, line 1	**1 148.8**	**1 132.3**
2.	*Operating costs*		
	Inception to 30 November 1995		
	Net expenditure	1 096.2	1 081.0
	Voluntary contributions in kind	—	—
	1 December 1995 to 31 May 1996		
	Net expenditure	16.1	15.6
	Voluntary contributions in kind	—	—
	1 to 30 June 1996		
	Net expenditure	2.7	2.6
	Voluntary contributions in kind	—	—
	1 July 1996 to 30 November 1996		
	Net expenditure	13.4	13.1
	Voluntary contributions in kind	—	—
	Total, line 2	**1 128.4**	**1 112.3**

		Gross	*Net*
3.	*Credits applied to Member States*		
	From unencumbered balances	3.3	3.1
	From surpluses for prior years	15.9	15.9
	Total, line 3	**19.2**	**19.0**
4.	*Unencumbered balance (1 less 2 and 3)*	1.2	1.0
B.	**Cash position**		
1.	*Income*		
	Assessed contributions received	1 028.6	1 028.6
	Voluntary contributions in kind	—	—
	Voluntary contributions in cash	—	—
	Interest income	1.8	1.8
	Miscellaneous income	—	—
	Total, line 1	**1 030.4**	**1 030.4**
2.	*Less net operating costs*		
	Inception to 30 November 1995	1 096.2	1 081.0
	1 December 1995 to 31 May 1996	16.1	15.6
	1 to 30 June 1996	2.7	2.6
	1 July 1996 to 30 November 1996	13.4	13.1
	Total, line 2	**1 128.4**	**1 112.3**
3.	*Projected operating deficit (1 less 2)*	(98.0)	(81.9)

UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/51/406
2 October 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifty-first session
Agenda item 87

QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1 - 3	2
II.	OVERVIEW	4 - 12	2
III.	ONGOING PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES	13 - 26	6
IV.	IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIFIC INFORMATION PROGRAMMES	27 - 40	10
V.	MAJOR UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES	41 - 44	14
VI.	UNITED NATIONS INFORMATION CENTRES	45 - 49	16
VII.	LIBRARY SERVICES	50 - 55	18
VIII.	UNITED NATIONS PUBLICATIONS BOARD AND MARKETING OF UNITED NATIONS PUBLICATIONS	56 - 60	19
IX.	PUBLISHING ACTIVITIES	61 - 65	20
Annex.	Major activities of the Department of Public Information in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/31 B (January-August 1996)		22

96-25391 (E) 291096 301096

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 50/31 B of 6 December 1995, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its eighteenth session and to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session on the implementation of the recommendations contained in that resolution.

2. The following documents related to topics covered by the resolution were submitted to the Committee on Information at its eighteenth session, held from 6 to 17 May 1996:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on United Nations information centres in 1995: allocation of resources from the regular budget of the United Nations (A/AC.198/1996/2);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the review of publications by the Department of Public Information (A/AC.198/1996/3);

(c) Report of the secretariat of the Joint United Nations Information Committee on the activities of the Committee in 1995 (conference room paper).

The Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information provided additional substantive information in his statement to the Committee on Information.

3. The deliberations of the Committee at its eighteenth session are reflected in its report to the General Assembly. 1/ The present report is intended to update information previously provided and to avoid, as much as possible, duplication of the material contained in the reports submitted to the Committee. The report focuses on the policies and strategies of the Department of Public Information in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/31 B and the directives of the Secretary-General. The annex to the report contains a list of major activities of the Department during the reporting period.

II. OVERVIEW

4. Since my last report on questions relating to information (A/50/462), the Department of Public Information has significantly enhanced its capacity to disseminate public information about the goals and achievements of the Organization. By taking the lead in integrating advanced technologies to increase the cost-effectiveness and the range of its outreach, and by implementing wide-ranging efficiency measures to raise productivity, the Department has met the system-wide challenge of managing rising interest and need for services even as available resources decline. At the same time, the Department has sought to articulate a coherent message regarding the diverse work of the United Nations by working more closely with other areas of the Organization and by sharpening the focus on key issues and constituencies. Its principal goal has been to foster, in a highly competitive news environment, greater support for the Organization's central role in meeting the challenges of peace, security and development. To this end, it has been effective in bringing

the message of an increasingly unified United Nations to all corners of the world through a variety of media formats and in as many languages as possible.

5. During the reporting period, the Department has sought to reflect the diversity of the Organization's work and accomplishments, highlighting in particular its peacekeeping operations and efforts in the area of social development, the theme of many of the recent world conferences. It has also given special attention to correcting distorted public perceptions of the Organization's work and effectiveness. The Department has initiated innovative public information efforts in close cooperation with peacekeeping and other field missions and with other United Nations partners. Such cooperation has enabled new efficiencies and enhanced the outreach of the network of United Nations information centres at the country level.

6. The Department has also undertaken new initiatives designed to address the pressures of increased demand for its information products and diminished financial resources. Measures implemented by the Department include:

(a) Emphasis on the priority issues of peace, security and development and the identification of targeted audiences, with priority given to redisseminators of information products to maximize multiplier effect;

(b) Integration of advanced information technologies, including use of the Internet and electronic publishing capacities, for the efficient production and more extensive dissemination of information products, while retaining, to the extent possible, conventional distribution outlets to long-standing audiences;

(c) Closer cooperation with substantive departments and other members of the United Nations system to ensure the highest level of professionalism and efficiency in the coverage of the Organization at work;

(d) Further streamlining the organizational structure of the Department to increase efficiency and accountability at all levels.

7. As requested in paragraph 23 of General Assembly resolution 50/31 B, the management of the Department consults regularly with the Bureau of the Committee on Information, together with the representatives of each regional group, the Group of 77 and China. Those meetings have enhanced the dialogue between the Department and Member States regarding the implementation of its mandates as well as the exchange of views on the coverage of issues of particular interest to Member States.

A. Portraying the United Nations system

8. With the Organization moving to reassert the relevance and the long-term impact of its work, public information activities have centred on portraying the United Nations system in its unity of purpose capable of responding to multiple global challenges in an efficient and cost-effective manner. It has become imperative to ensure that goals and activities of the Organization as a whole are transparent, and that United Nations programmes are understood as efficiently promoting human welfare and freedoms in response to the dynamic

political and economic currents of our time. The importance of this objective has been duly recognized at the highest levels of management of organizations of the United Nations system. Accordingly, at the initiative of a meeting of United Nations officials in the economic and social field, the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information convened a working group on public information activities of the United Nations to look into ways and means of further sharpening the message of the United Nations and projecting more effectively the scope of the work of the Organization, particularly in the field of economic and social development, with a view to broadening the outreach to new audiences and constituencies and strengthening the support for this vital, but less known, part of its activities. Following extensive discussions, the Working Group submitted a report containing a number of proposals for action, several of which the Department has already implemented. The Department has also taken initiatives to strengthen the cooperation and coordination with its partners within the United Nations system through the machinery of the Joint United Nations Information Committee in order to ensure cost-effective management of the dwindling resources for public information activities in all organizations of the system. Cooperation and coordination within the Joint United Nations Information Committee has contributed to the strengthening of the joint message of the United Nations system with global appeal, stressing the interrelationship among its various members and their common objectives. This cooperation, in particular during the recent cycle of major United Nations conferences on development issues, has led to greater support by traditional partners of the United Nations and has established a tangible outreach to new audiences such as youth, local authorities and other levels of civil society. Also, the Department has established a consultative mechanism with other departments, namely the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, to strengthen coordination and planning for the public information elements of operations in the field, including peacekeeping operations. The Department has also expanded working relationships with the regional commissions. The coordinating role of United Nations information centres and services, and their close cooperation with other United Nations offices in the field, has become particularly important in this regard.

B. Consolidation of information efforts in the field

9. More than 30 United Nations information centres are currently headed by resident representatives of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Of those, 15 information centres, after consultation with the respective host Governments, have been fully integrated with field offices of UNDP, with a view to achieving economies through sharing of common services and projecting a unified image of the Organization at the country level. In all cases, the relevant prerequisites for successful integration have been taken into account. Under the guidance of the Department of Public Information, and as directed by the Head of the Department, all such United Nations information centres are maintaining their functional autonomy and are making all efforts to communicate the United Nations message in accordance with their public information mandate. Since public opinion about and public support for the Organization is built at national and regional levels, the strengthening of United Nations information centres and their cooperation with other United Nations offices in the field has

been pursued with the aim of promoting an informed understanding of the work of the Organization among wider audiences.

C. New initiatives in radio and television broadcasting

10. The Department has initiated a streamlining and modernization of its radio production operations. This effort has entailed the consolidation of all radio programme and production resources under a single service, and the establishment of digital audio work stations that assure impeccable sound quality, automated multi-track mixing, access to all sound sources, and digital sound processing capabilities. By special arrangements with a number of broadcasting organizations, almost seven hours of news and current affairs programmes per week are fed for short-wave broadcast to target areas in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Latin American and Caribbean region. Although radio documentaries and features continue to be distributed by conventional means, on cassettes and open-reel audio tapes, many of them are now fed electronically to broadcasters for direct transmission to their listeners. High-profile activities of United Nations Television, such as the provision of live coverage during the special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly, and the interactive video conference between the Secretary-General and the combined crew of the Second Space Shuttle Atlantis/Mir Docking Mission that took place in November 1995, have demonstrated the Department's expertise, technical competence and professionalism. Built on these successful undertakings, the work of the Department in the audio-visual field has moved in a new direction, enabling it to provide a better service to broadcasters in their need for products that meet the highest standards of the industry.

D. Electronic communication and the use of the Internet

11. United Nations information on the Internet has gained a significantly greater presence on the World Wide Web: a dramatic rise in "visits" to the "home page" has resulted. Following the Department's pioneering efforts to have a World Wide Web presence, other departments and offices began contributing information for posting on the Internet and establishing their own Web sites. Because this effort required a more focused interdepartmental coordination, the Department took on the responsibility of organizing Secretariat-wide meetings and establishing interdepartmental working groups on substantive Internet matters. One such group has redesigned the United Nations "home page" with easier access for users and better organization of the underlying material. The new design was launched in September 1996. In order to maintain and better coordinate the United Nations presence on the Internet, the Department established an Electronic Communications Unit in May 1996. A variety of material is posted on the "home page" on a regular basis, including factual and background information on the United Nations, as well as the Daily Highlights, press releases in English and French, daily press briefings, the bimonthly newsletter Development Update, etc. Substantive information on the principal organs of the United Nations and their work has been updated. Other departments have provided documents on economic and social development, international law, global environment and human rights, to name just a few. Information on the services and collections of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and the sale of

publications and United Nations stamps are also available through the Internet. In order to facilitate subsequent location and retrieval of information, a full text searching capability, including a United Nations system locator, has been added.

E. Rapid outreach to media and non-governmental organizations

12. The Department has established a media response team to monitor news about the United Nations on a daily basis and to prepare, whenever required, appropriate and timely responses to distortions of facts. This work has had a positive dual result: correcting misunderstandings about the United Nations and its work, while promoting closer professional ties with news organizations and non-governmental groups. In its effort to reach key redisseminators, the Department has continued to generate up-to-date, easy-to-read fact sheets on the United Nations and its activities. These one-page leaflets, revised monthly, offer a detailed account of various aspects of the Organization: its history, functions and ongoing missions. The conciseness and brevity of the fact sheets have made them especially effective tools in spreading the United Nations message to a large and diverse audience. Begun during the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, the fact sheets include "Setting the record straight: some facts about the United Nations"; "The United Nations financial crisis at a glance"; "United Nations conferences: what do they accomplish?"; "The United Nations and business: a global partnership"; "The United Nations: protecting the global environment"; "Of drought and dust bowls: getting the global picture"; and "DPI: achieving still more with less". Information from the fact sheets has found its way into numerous news media accounts, while United Nations information centres have had notable success in using the fact sheets as the basis for "Op-Ed" essays and other interactions with news media and non-governmental organizations. The United Nations Association of the United States of America, for example, incorporated one of the fact sheets into its media kits.

III. ONGOING PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

13. In accordance with the mandate set out in General Assembly resolution 50/31 B, and in order to meet the objectives set by the Secretary-General, activities of the Department as the focal point for the public information tasks of the United Nations have been further strengthened. In a fiercely competitive communications environment and in a situation of unprecedented budgetary constraints, the Department has continuously identified ways to focus its work on current issues, to ensure the timeliness of its information products, and to maintain high standards in its activities and services in order to reach the widest possible audiences.

14. The Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General is the main contact point with the world press covering the United Nations, particularly with the media representatives accredited at Headquarters. Through the daily briefings given by the Spokesman, as well as the increasing number of one-on-one contacts with journalists, the Office provides authoritative and timely information on peacekeeping, peacemaking and humanitarian assistance, as well as on a wide

range of economic and social issues. The activities of the Office are essential in helping the media to reflect comprehensively and accurately the role of the Organization in all areas of its mandate.

15. The Assistant Secretary-General maintains direct contacts with senior officials of the international media, including those in the field of broadcasting. These links have been further strengthened as a result of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and the recent cycle of major United Nations conferences on development and are a clear expression of the heightened interest of information media in the world Organization and its role. In view of this, the Department, jointly with the management of Italy's public broadcasting organization, RAI, is organizing a United Nations world television forum on the role of television in shaping a changing world, to be held in New York on 19 and 20 November 1996. The event will bring together prominent personalities from television, diplomacy and related fields of public life, to address crucial aspects of current developments in the audio-visual media and their impact on society and international affairs. The event is totally funded from extrabudgetary resources.

16. The Media Division provides press releases, photographic, television and radio coverage and programmes, video feature productions and technical services to the media. During the reporting period, liaison and assistance was extended to more than 5,000 permanently and temporarily accredited correspondents and other media representatives. The unabated interest of the world media in major United Nations meetings was proved again during the recent second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), for which 3,865 accreditations were provided.

17. In spite of budgetary constraints, the production of press releases in both working languages of the Secretariat (English and French), for which the General Assembly expressed its full support in paragraph 18 of General Assembly resolution 50/31 B, has been maintained, but the financial standing of the Organization has compelled the curtailment of coverage of some meetings.

18. In accordance with paragraph 19 of General Assembly resolution 50/31 B, the Department's cooperation with broadcasting organizations around the world continued with the provision of monthly, weekly and daily radio programmes in 15 languages. The Media Division was able to build upon the interest of broadcasters in United Nations radio programming generated by the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization. The traditional radio programmes "World in Review" and "Perspective" are now fed by the integrated system of digital network lines to the World Radio Network, for retransmission by cable, satellite, AM and FM radio to Europe, Africa, North America, Asia and the Pacific. The radio series "Population and Development", commissioned by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), was broadcast by approximately 1,300 radio stations, and the series "Law of the Sea" by about 600 radio stations. The Division is exploring the possibility of packaging radio programmes into sound files for posting on the United Nations "home page" on the Internet. Full text searchable databases of audio-visual materials on Security Council activities, as well as of the Department's video series "UN in Action", have already been prepared for posting onto the "home page". In addition, United Nations photographs are widely accessed electronically. A total of 25,383

visits to the United Nations photo page and 460,548 downloadings of individual images were registered during the first six months of 1996.

19. Compilations on the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations were sold to 64 television broadcasters worldwide for use in their productions on this event. Eight 30-second public service announcements series, "UN Facts", were broadcast in 27 countries around the world. "A Place to Stand", a video documentary on the role of the United Nations, was produced in six languages and widely broadcast during the anniversary period. It won the coveted Golden Eagle Award, the prestigious international New York Festival's Silver Medal and the Silver Telly Award, and also received a Certificate for Creative Excellence from the United States International Film and Video Festival. A 50-minute video documentary on the history and role of peacekeeping, "No Place to Hide", adapted into 15 languages, has been aired by television stations around the world and received the United States International Film and Video Festival's Certificate for Creative Excellence. "Portraits of Age" and "Mission to Planet Earth", two other successful video programmes, received finalist awards at international media markets. The Cable News Network (CNN) World Report Special Award was given to "UN in Action". This series, also adapted into Arabic, French, Russian and Spanish, is aired weekly by about 110 television stations worldwide. The English version is broadcast weekly by the CNN "World Report" and reaches 400 million households worldwide.

20. The Media Division is expanding its utilization of satellite transmission, where appropriate, to meet deadlines for distribution of its video products. The 1995 "Year in Review", a 15-minute video in six languages covering the Organization's work, was transmitted by satellite, reaching an estimated audience of over 350 million households. The Secretary-General's United Nations Day Message 1995, was for the first time sent by satellite in three languages - Arabic, English and French - and reached an estimated 400 million households. The Department continues to foster strong working relationships with international broadcasting organizations, resulting in a rebroadcasting of its video news highlights around the world.

21. Non-governmental organizations continue to serve as a vital link between the United Nations and the public at large. To keep them abreast of United Nations activities, and to generate support at the grass-roots level, the Department maintains a close relationship with a community of 1,500 associated non-governmental organizations from different regions of the world. At Headquarters, senior officials of the United Nations and representatives of Member States have continuous contact with the non-governmental community through weekly briefings organized by the Department. The DPI/NGO Resource Centre, soon to be relocated to the Secretariat building, is available to representatives of non-governmental organizations, providing access to United Nations documents as well as publications issued by the Department. In 1996, the Resource Centre installed a television monitor with a direct feed to open United Nations meetings in progress, as well as computer stations to provide users with access to the United Nations "home page" and other United Nations databases on the Internet. The DPI/NGO Web site, established in August 1996, has become an efficient and cost-effective tool to make selected United Nations publications and information available to the non-governmental community at large. The forty-ninth Annual Conference of the Department of Public

Information for Non-Governmental Organizations was held from 10 to 12 September 1996, under the theme "The United Nations: Facing the Challenges of a Changing World". The Conference, attended by more than 1,450 representatives of 514 non-governmental organizations from 59 Member States, focused on the deliberations of the five high-level working groups of the General Assembly on the broad process of United Nations reform. In addition, the Conference provided a unique opportunity for networking among non-governmental organizations as well as a chance to discuss how they could further strengthen cooperation with the United Nations.

22. The guided tours programme at Headquarters continued to rank among the most popular tourist attractions in New York City and remained the most immediate means of reaching students and other groups from the host country. The Department's promotional activities for the tour included the placement of posters on a pro bono basis at major airports in New York, Chicago and Atlanta. Since August 1996, recorded information about the guided tours, which are conducted in approximately 20 languages, is available through the use of a touch-tone telephone menu in nine languages. The restriction on the number of visitors per group for security reasons and the resulting increase in the operation's staff costs, however, reduced the revenue-generating capacity of the operation. As requested in paragraph 21 of General Assembly resolution 50/31 B, efforts are being made to restructure the tour route, taking into account security considerations, with a view to eventually increasing the group size.

23. The United Nations Information Fair, to be held at Headquarters from 22 to 25 October 1996, will bring together most of the organizations and programmes of the United Nations system. Hosted and coordinated by the Department of Public Information for the seventh consecutive year, this popular event provides participants with a useful forum to acquaint the public with the full range of their activities and their effect on peoples' lives. The cost for setting up the exhibit kiosks and organizing the entire event is shared jointly by the participants.

24. During the period under review, the Department continued to respond to an increasing number of inquiries from the public. Addressing most frequently asked questions about the Organization and its work, fact sheets and continuously updated information materials have been made available on the United Nations "home page". In addition, as a pilot project, the Department will provide an electronic mail address to the public as an additional channel of communicating factual information about the Organization.

25. Education outreach has become an area where the Department is placing additional emphasis. Building on the network of teachers and professors who regularly bring their students for briefings and seminars to the United Nations, the Department plans to convene a workshop for teachers with the aim of increasing their familiarity with United Nations issues and encouraging them to share ideas and experiences in teaching about the United Nations.

26. During the reporting period, the Department has developed the capacity to design exhibits utilizing, for the first time, in-house computer-generated designs. This enhanced internal design capability will ensure greater flexibility, quicker production, and easy updating of exhibits as events and

issues warrant. The first computer-generated exhibit on the history and major activities of the United Nations was produced for display at the G-7 Summit meeting held at Lyon, France, in June. This bilingual exhibit, which can be adapted easily for display in other countries, will be part of the guided tours route during the fifty-first session of the General Assembly. In addition, two major projects have been undertaken by the Department in recent months to design and produce exhibits for locations outside Headquarters. In cooperation with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, the Department produced the exhibit "Sports against Drugs" for display at United Nations premises in Vienna and New York and at the Olympic Village in Atlanta during the 1996 Olympic Games. For Habitat II, the Department produced a flexible, lightweight display that can be modified at minimal cost. It is expected that this exhibit will also attract audiences at the World Food Summit scheduled to take place in Rome in November. The Department was also involved in the mounting and design of a photographic display and art exhibit at Headquarters of "The Chernobyl Disaster: Ten Years After". Technical assistance was also provided to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs for the installation of a major exhibit on land mines held at Headquarters during the summer.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIFIC INFORMATION PROGRAMMES

27. The Promotion and Public Services Division of the Department is entrusted with the task of developing thematically integrated information programmes on priority issues before the international community. Emphasis is on designing and implementing information strategies, promotional activities and public services that highlight the Organization at centre stage in furthering sustainable development, peace and security, democracy, human rights and humanitarian assistance, as mandated by the General Assembly and directed by the Secretary-General.

28. The role of the United Nations in the field of economic development has been reflected in several special activities of the Department. The bimonthly publication Development Update has evolved from providing status reports on the preparatory process for major United Nations conferences to reflecting United Nations social and economic initiatives, debt and aid issues, as well as investment and trade trends. Its content has not only been broadened but has also become more incisive and analytical. The publication is distributed to a select group of economists, journalists, academics and business leaders, as well as to the network of United Nations offices in the field. For wider distribution, it is also being placed on the United Nations "home page" on the World Wide Web. Development Update and the special economic development mailing list that the Department has developed are important tools in the promotion of the integrated approach of the United Nations system to development issues. The Department played an essential role in launching the World Economic and Social Survey, prepared by the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, in June 1996. A widely disseminated promotional packet in English and French generated extensive media coverage of the survey in many parts of the world. The Department also coordinated the launching of a number of reports of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and provided media services at the ninth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held at Midrand, South Africa, from 27 April to 11 May 1996.

29. In cooperation with the International Narcotics Control Board, the Department carried out promotional activities that brought significant publicity for the launch of the Board's annual report in June 1996. The exhibit "Sports against Drugs", referred to in paragraph 26 above, was shown at Headquarters in June in conjunction with the high-level segment of the 1996 session of the Economic and Social Council devoted to the issue of international cooperation against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances. The opening of the exhibit was attended by acclaimed sports personalities, senior representatives of Governments and senior officials of the United Nations system.

30. In its programme for human rights, the Department has continued to promote issues within the framework of the three current decades related to human rights: the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004), the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1994-2003) and the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (1993-2002). The Department was continuously involved in promoting the work of the Commission on Human Rights and its subsidiary bodies, and has worked closely with the Centre for Human Rights. The multimedia programme of print, television and radio products on human rights continues to include the Department's promotional activities at Headquarters, Geneva and in the field, particularly to observe the International Day for the Eradication of Racial Discrimination (21 March), the International Day of the World's Indigenous People (9 August) and Human Rights Day (10 December). The Department assisted with arrangements for a panel discussion to mark the International Day of Families on 15 May 1996 on the theme, "Families: victims of poverty and homelessness", co-sponsored by the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, the New York Non-Governmental Organization Committee on the Family and the New York Non-Governmental Organization Committee on Southern Africa. Later in 1996, the Department plans to hold at Headquarters a journalists' round table on human rights. Other priorities in the field of social development have also continued to receive the close attention of the Department.

31. The Department is cooperating with the United Nations Children's Fund in the production of a media kit and a popular version booklet of the special study on the impact of armed conflict on children, which was prepared by an expert appointed by the Secretary-General. These activities are aimed at mobilizing public opinion and action to protect children from the ravages of war.

32. The Department's public information initiatives on peace and security focus on three main goals:

(a) Ensuring a coordinated approach to public information relating to individual peacekeeping and other field operations, both at Headquarters and within mission areas;

(b) Improving the Organization's capacity to reach new and wider audiences with accurate, timely information about the United Nations role in promoting and maintaining international peace and security;

(c) Communicating the message that United Nations peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts must be complemented by international support for post-

conflict reconstruction and sustainable development, promotion of respect for human rights and improved governance.

33. Recent experience has demonstrated the critical importance of effective public information in promoting public understanding of, and support for, the Organization's peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building efforts. As these efforts have grown in number, size and complexity, the relevant audiences have also expanded and channels of communication have multiplied. Accordingly, efforts to disseminate information about peacemaking and peacekeeping and the media's reporting of United Nations action have become increasingly complex. The speed, volume and immediacy of reporting has fundamentally altered the environment in which United Nations peacemaking and peacekeeping activities are undertaken. Accurate, balanced public information emanating from the United Nations about the Organization's efforts is often lost in the rapid flow of reports and commentary from a growing number of sources. Journalists and policymakers are flooded with information and pressed by deadlines. The Department is faced with the dilemma of meeting demands for immediate information, reaction and comment, while ensuring the need for accuracy and balance.

34. The above factors have placed in sharp relief the need for a closer working relationship and better coordination between the Department of Public Information and the substantive departments and offices dealing with political, peacekeeping and humanitarian issues, as requested in paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 50/31 B. The Interdepartmental Working Group on Media Strategies for Peacekeeping and Other Field Operations (see para. 8 above), established at the initiative of the Department, has helped improve coordination and offers a useful mechanism for advance planning of public information components in the field. Through this mechanism, the Departments of Political Affairs, Peacekeeping Operations, Humanitarian Affairs and Public Information have elaborated standard guidelines for planning, establishing and supporting information components of peacekeeping and other field operations. Procedures for developing and maintaining a roster of potential candidates for appointment as public information personnel in peacekeeping missions have been agreed upon. During 1996, the Group facilitated interdepartmental consultation on public information issues relating to field missions in Angola, Burundi, Haiti, Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia. It has addressed technical and policy questions, such as staffing and budgetary requirements for information components in the field, as well as United Nations radio and television coverage of missions.

35. Radio broadcasting options for the Organization in several mission areas have also been considered in the Working Group. As the most powerful and effective medium in virtually all mission areas, radio broadcasting in support of United Nations peacemaking, peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance continues to be a major policy area for decision. Given the power of radio, as demonstrated most vividly in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide, there is a growing perception in some quarters that the United Nations should have an independent capacity for radio broadcasting to support its peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts in mission areas or conflict zones. Lessons learned from several recent attempts to establish and maintain United Nations radio stations in peacekeeping missions have made it clear that this is more easily conceived than done. Setting up a radio station requires support and sustained effort that go beyond

frequency attribution or the requisition of a transmitter. It involves staffing, training, development of sustainable programming in relevant languages, building a listenership, interacting with the target population and monitoring and evaluating feedback. The political, legal and programmatic questions involved, as well as the technical and financial capacity required to launch and sustain effective United Nations radio broadcasting operations in mission areas, deserve the careful attention of the Secretariat and Member States alike.

36. Much remains to be done to benefit from the recent experience of United Nations public information efforts in field missions. The Department has participated in lessons learned exercises on the United Nations Operation in Somalia and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda, as well as in the mid-mission review of the United Nations Mission in Haiti conducted by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Where information is concerned, it is evident that the Organization's approach to planning, staffing and supporting information components of peacekeeping and other field missions should be more systematic and focused. As the "responsibility centre" for public information within the Secretariat, the Department is working with the departments that have direct responsibility for the overall management of these operations to arrive at agreed, well-informed decisions regarding realistic public information objectives and requirements. The efforts by the Department aim at ensuring that planning and support for public information components in peacekeeping and other field missions benefit from the input of staff members who have the requisite technical expertise and professional experience in fields such as broadcasting, publishing and press relations, as well as a clear understanding of the United Nations.

37. The Department is working together with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to develop standard operating procedures for public information components in the field, as well as a manual for public information personnel in field missions, based on recent experience and the guidelines adopted by the Interdepartmental Working Group. Sustained and concerted effort on the part of the Department of Public Information and the other concerned departments and offices will be needed to meet the demand for public information which reinforces the Organization's credibility and strengthens its efforts at peacemaking and peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and post-conflict reconstruction. The Department continues to provide personnel and technical support to peacekeeping missions to the extent possible, and also produces and disseminates information materials worldwide through print and broadcast means and by posting information on current missions on the United Nations Web site on the Internet. Also, the Department cooperated with The Quarterly Journal of Military History on a second edition of the United Nations peacekeeping publication Soldiers for Peace, to be published during the fourth quarter of 1996. This anthology is presented with a foreword by the Secretary-General.

38. United Nations public information relating to the Middle East and the question of Palestine has taken into account the rapidly changing political situation. The Department has focused its efforts on projects with practical relevance to the new Palestinian experience. Within this framework, the Department is continuing its training activities for Palestinian media practitioners, successfully begun in 1995. Under the programme, 10 Palestinian

journalists began a six-week training and orientation course at United Nations Headquarters on 15 September 1996. They attended briefings by officials of the United Nations system, as well as by representatives of media organizations; participated in a skills training internship at CNN headquarters; attended two weeks of special classes at Columbia University; and obtained on-the-job training by serving as temporary United Nations correspondents on behalf of their media organizations.

39. In cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/31 A, the Department continued its activities for the promotion of independent and pluralistic media. In the tradition of earlier seminars for the African region, held at Windhoek in 1991, for the Asian region, held at Almaty in 1992, and for the Latin American and Caribbean region, held at Santiago de Chile in 1994, the Department organized a seminar for the Arab region at Sana'a from 6 to 11 January 1996. The Sana'a seminar ended successfully with the adoption of a declaration containing recommendations to promote freedom of the press, pluralism and diversity in the media of the Arab countries.

40. The Department's annual training programme for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries, a six-week programme held at Headquarters during the plenary session of the General Assembly, has to date seen a total of 237 journalists from 124 countries taking part. The 1996 programme takes place from 16 September to 24 October. Invited to attend were participants from 14 countries: Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Colombia, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Paraguay, Poland, Rwanda, United Arab Emirates and Zimbabwe. In addition, four journalists from Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar and Swaziland, sponsored by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, are also participating.

V. MAJOR UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES

41. Since 1994, the Department and other members of the Joint United Nations Information Committee have focused on the promotion of four major international conferences on development issues: the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994); the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995); the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995); and Habitat II (Istanbul, 1996). Implementation of the commitments and plans of action emanating from those conferences has prompted the Department to plan its activities in as integrated a manner as possible. The Joint United Nations Information Committee, chaired by the Assistant Secretary-General, decided in 1996 to establish a New York-based open-ended working group to meet periodically, as required, to coordinate promotional activities on development issues in follow-up to those major conferences. The Department of Public Information, in cooperation with the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, has also prepared an information strategy to raise global awareness of the special session of the General Assembly in 1997 that will review implementation of Agenda 21.

42. In follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development, the Department has concentrated its efforts on the promotion of the issues within the context of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17 October), the

International Year for the Eradication of Poverty (1996) and preparations for the International Decade to begin in 1997. In order to prepare for the International Year and the Decade, during 1995 and 1996 the Department convened a series of Joint United Nations Information Committee Task Force meetings on information aspects of those observances. For the launch of the Year in December 1995, the Department released a brochure entitled "1996: International Year for the Eradication of Poverty" and a special media kit on United Nations system-wide activities relating to the eradication of poverty.

43. The Fourth World Conference on Women has accorded the Department a central role in the dissemination of information about the Platform for Action and the five-year plan for the advancement of women. Accordingly, the Department has utilized the full array of its promotional activities and multimedia products to publicize as widely as possible this major document in the six official languages. Owing to overwhelming demand, a summary of the document, issued soon after the Conference, was reprinted in July 1996. In order to keep the momentum of the Beijing Conference alive, the Department has issued features highlighting national and international action for the implementation of the Platform for Action. Special information bulletins were issued covering the proceedings of the fifteenth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, held in February 1996, and the fortieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in March. Reprints of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women have been produced. The Department has continued to use audio-visual media to highlight international action aimed at the advancement of women. The weekly radio programme on women has devoted segments focusing on specific areas of critical concern, identified by the Platform. "Defying the Odds", a half-hour video documentary on the results of the Conference and profiling non-governmental activities, was produced, while the "World Chronicle" programme produced in March 1996 focused on the proposed Optional Protocol to the Convention and other current issues. Expanding ties with the community of non-governmental organizations for promotion of the objectives of the Conference remains a priority for the Department. A special event organized at Headquarters on 8 March 1995 to mark the International Women's Day brought together several hundred non-governmental organizations. In September, the Department, in cooperation with the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development and the International Women's Tribune Centre, hosted a special event to mark the first anniversary of the Beijing Conference. The meeting was opened by the Secretary-General and featured an open discussion with representatives of non-governmental organizations, many of whom had attended the Beijing Conference.

44. The Department successfully launched a major information campaign leading up to the opening of Habitat II. In close cooperation with the secretariat of Habitat II, the host Government and a number of non-governmental organizations, a wide range of print and audio-visual activities were carried out. At the Conference site, the Department prepared an inter-agency exhibit, organized a pre-Conference journalists' encounter and provided press services including media liaison, press releases and radio and television coverage.

VI. UNITED NATIONS INFORMATION CENTRES

45. United Nations information centres stand at the front line of heightened public awareness of, and interest in, the Organization. On a daily basis, the centres face an increasing challenge in the effective fulfilment of their mandate. At the beginning of 1996, many information centres were engaged in follow-up activities to the outreach programmes organized to reflect the first 50 years of the Organization. They continued to build new audiences, focusing their efforts on cooperation with major redisseminators, such as educational institutions, national media, United Nations associations and other non-governmental organizations to enhance awareness of the Organization's priority issues. With activities such as "model United Nations" and lectures, the centres extended their outreach to young audiences. In September, they played a pivotal role in organizing parallel information activities locally to coincide with the forty-ninth Annual Conference of the Department of Public Information for non-governmental organizations at Headquarters. These parallel activities are expected to serve as a catalyst for strengthening partnerships between the United Nations system and local non-governmental organizations in the promotion of issues of common interest.

46. In coordination with local United Nations system partners and others, the information centres continued to arrange publication of booklets and other materials, and to organize round tables, press briefings, lectures and special events to promote the work of the Organization. To commemorate International Women's Day, more than 20 information centres established affiliations with local non-governmental partners interested in women's and children's issues. The information centres cooperated with government ministries, municipalities, foreign embassies and private sector partners in publicizing a range of issues concerning the work of the Organization. For a conference on metropolitan governance, the United Nations Information Centre at Warsaw cooperated with the City of Warsaw and the Polish Municipal Development Agency; the United Nations Information Centre at Lisbon, together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and TAP-Air Portugal, organized an essay competition on the work of the United Nations and worked with the National Youth Institute and the Portuguese Youth Institute on other projects; the United Nations Information Centre at Accra, with assistance from the Government of Ghana and United Nations agencies, launched promotional activities for the System-Wide Special Initiative on Africa; and the information centres at Brazzaville, Buenos Aires, New Delhi, Panama and Sana'a co-sponsored exhibitions on the work of the Organization.

47. The information centres devoted special attention to the promotion of issues of economic and social development, in particular the main concerns of Habitat II. Seed money was provided to 34 information centres, enabling them to undertake special pre- and post-Conference information activities, including local-language translation and production of the Department's information materials on the Conference. Information centres in many countries played a pivotal role in launching the 1996 Human Development Report, and helped to launch the UNCTAD World Investment Report and the 1996 World Economic and Social Survey. At the same time, in cooperation with the local press and broadcasting organizations, information centres continued to give full promotional support to other aspects of the United Nations social development agenda. They garnered significant coverage in influential newspapers through the placement of articles

and statements by the Secretary-General, newspaper supplements and press releases. Arrangements were also made with local partners for the training of journalists, publication of newsletters, organization of journalists' encounters and translation into local languages of major United Nations publications, documents and other information materials. By the end of the second quarter of 1996, information centres had received and disseminated more than 3,000 United Nations titles, including publications, documents, press releases and other information materials. Approximately 30 per cent of these were translated into local languages, including Armenian, Bangla, Czech, Dutch, Ewe, Farsi, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Swahili, Tamil, Thai, Urdu and Vietnamese. The titles included the Secretary-General's Annual Report on the Work of the Organization, UN in Brief, Basic Facts About the United Nations, the Charter of the United Nations, An Agenda for Development and information backgrounders on Habitat II.

48. The information centres have continued to strengthen their relationships with radio and television organizations and producers to encourage the development and airing of programmes about the work of the Organization. They have also co-produced programmes in cooperation with partners from the United Nations system. On a daily basis, information centres are responding to an increasing volume of inquiries about the Organization and its work. During the first quarter of 1996, the information centres at Buenos Aires, Paris and Tokyo each handled more than 3,000 telephone and mail-in inquiries. Thirty-three information centres also reported significant increases in the numbers of visitors to their libraries. In the first quarter of 1996 those libraries welcomed more than 36,000 visitors, with the United Nations Information Centre at Santa Fé de Bogota reporting the highest number (3,665) during that time.

49. The information centres have made positive strides in applying advanced information technologies in their daily functions. Multimedia presentations, production of compact disks read-only memory (CD-ROMs) with local partners and creation of local "home pages" on the World Wide Web, are gradually becoming part of information centres' operations. To communicate with Headquarters, and in many cases with their local constituencies, the information centres use electronic mail, public electronic networks and the Internet. Presently, only 28 information centres continue to use facsimile transmissions as a main communications vehicle. In the immediate future, the Department plans to transfer 17 information centres currently using facsimile and Wang-based electronic mail to cc:Mail through SITA facilities. Libraries of the information centres are regularly provided with the bibliographic collections (UNBIS-Plus) on CD-ROM. As part of their library services, some information centres in countries with less-developed communications infrastructure are also able, on an experimental basis, to provide visitors with access to the new information technologies. The introduction of new technologies, together with the appropriate training of staff of information centres, has already resulted in significant savings in external printing and other communications costs. Equipment used in the daily operations of information centres and their libraries has been upgraded with new computers featuring an integrated office automation package that contains desktop publishing and up-to-date communications facilities (modems) as well as CD-ROM drives. In addition, the staff at 21 information centres is currently being trained in computer applications.

VII. LIBRARY SERVICES

50. For the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, the use of advanced technologies has opened significant opportunities to become more modern, cost-efficient and audience-focused. The Library has installed a CD-ROM server capable of sharing more than 15 CD-ROM disks on the Headquarters local area network (LAN). Through link-ups to the LAN and a CD-ROM server, the Library is now also able to make full text information from outside on-line services and databases concurrently available to Secretariat units. In cases where remote access is not possible, a selective dissemination of information has been initiated whereby the Dag Hammarskjöld Library subscribes to electronic newsletters and news alerts for Secretariat-wide transmission via cc:Mail. In order to provide a continuous news feed from major international press services, several NewsEdge work stations are now available in the Library. Other improvements include the installation of two Optical Disk System workstations for Library clients. These stations enable their users to download and/or print the full text of United Nations documents.

51. In July 1996, the Library launched its presence on the United Nations World Wide Web site, presenting an overview of services and collections as well as a special area containing on-line research tools with a focus on the Organization and its work. Reference files for United Nations documentation, previously available for consultation in the Library only, are now posted on the "home page" and can be accessed by researchers worldwide. With the growing importance of the Internet as an essential information source, the Library has dedicated three work stations for Internet access and introduced the hands-on workshop "CyberSeek: A Basic Course in Internet Information Retrieval" organized twice a week for the personnel of the permanent missions. To further assist staff of permanent missions and the Secretariat, a CD-ROM help desk has been set up.

52. During the reporting period, the Library continued its efforts to enhance efficiency in all aspects of its operations. It centralized its receipt and processing of incoming documents and publications, initiated on-line indexing of United Nations documentation, and took steps to develop a shared indexing network among the libraries of the United Nations system. These measures have streamlined the flow of work and ensured speedy and timely access to information for all users. As a means of broadening public outreach, the Library has begun to produce a series of bibliographies on current topics and issues of continuing interest relating to the proceedings of the Security Council and major aspects of United Nations peacekeeping operations. These bibliographies are available in print and on the United Nations Web site.

53. While making information sources widely accessible within the Secretariat, the Library has been able to save financial resources through cancellation of multiple copies of expensive reference works. However, if other departments and offices within the United Nations that benefit from networking with the Library would share the cost, the Library could become the electronic gateway for the Organization's acquisition and management of electronic information resources.

54. The Library disseminates information about the Organization and its activities by arranging for the timely distribution of documents and publications through its system of depository libraries. Over the past year,

seven additional depository libraries were established, bringing the total to 355 libraries in 142 countries and territories.

55. The Integrated Library Management System is now implemented for acquisition operations. Purchase orders are generated through the new Horizon system, and since they are linked to an accounting module, financial commitments can be tracked on a daily basis. Statistical data on titles ordered by subject category are also provided. Implementation of the remaining modules (serials, cataloguing, circulation, public access) is scheduled for the latter part of 1996.

VIII. UNITED NATIONS PUBLICATIONS BOARD AND MARKETING OF UNITED NATIONS PUBLICATIONS

56. During the reporting period, the Publications Board, under the Chairmanship of the Assistant Secretary-General, has coordinated and is monitoring the 1996-1997 publications programme of the United Nations. The Board met in December 1995 and June 1996 to approve important new United Nations initiatives, including those on publishing in electronic formats and the creation of an on-line electronic subscription service for the United Nations Treaty Series, as well as on a new, less restrictive policy of attribution of authorship in United Nations publications. Its Working Committee has continued to meet monthly to consider a range of technical matters, including external contracts for publication of United Nations materials, such as the Blue Books Series, in other than the official languages, as well as UNBIS-Plus on CD-ROM, statistical reports, data collections and others. The Committee also reviewed changes in the publications programme with the goal of achieving efficiency savings required in the Organization.

57. The Sales and Marketing Section of the Department of Public Information is responsible for the commercial dissemination of system-wide United Nations publications. This includes the marketing and promotion of titles, coordinating activities of distributors, the processing of orders, liaison with United Nations departments to develop saleability of publications, providing user and market feedback, and the negotiation and sale of rights for commercial publication of United Nations materials by external publishers. The responsibilities also include the management of the United Nations Bookstore.

58. On 1 September 1995, the Sales and Marketing Section was transferred to the Department from the Office of Conference and Support Services. Subsequently, the External Publications Office and the Geneva Sales Unit were also transferred to the Department on 1 January and 1 August 1996, respectively. These moves have significantly enhanced the Department's efforts to achieve wider commercial dissemination of its publications and have resulted in more of them being offered for sale. Marketing feedback and insight is also helping to better plan and focus the Department's publications programme, resulting in broader commercial appeal. The transfer of the External Publications Office to the Sales and Marketing Section has led to efficiencies through better coordination of publishing and sales activities. The inclusion of sales and marketing into the Department brought a commercial dimension to its activities. New

opportunities for dissemination and revenue generation can be developed, inter alia, through multimedia products based on video, radio and print.

59. The Blue Books Series has been extensively promoted around the world through publications displays, exhibits, advertising, direct mail, book reviews and press releases. A line of souvenir items for the fiftieth anniversary was developed and sold internationally, bringing in significant revenues for 1995 and the beginning of 1996. With funding from the Fiftieth Anniversary Trust Fund, the Department is continuing the educational work initiated for the observance, with the aim of making this a self-sustaining programme. The educational kits are being given wide international promotion and an interactive educational site is being developed on the Internet. These two programmes will also form the basis of activities to promote an annual global teach-in on the United Nations.

60. In August 1995, the United Nations Publications Catalogue was put up on the Internet, giving wide exposure to information on publications and generating orders. New initiatives undertaken in 1996 include an academic course adoption programme. The programme allows members of the academic community to follow United Nations publication activities on the Internet, and to place bulk orders for students throughout the year. Previously, this programme involved an extensive mail campaign which could only be undertaken once a year. A number of new electronic products are being developed through cooperation with other departments. These products take advantage of electronic methods of distribution to generate additional or new revenues from information resources that already exist within the Organization. In 1996, two new CD-ROM products, the Statistical Yearbook CD-ROM, fortieth edition, and the System of National Accounts compact disc, were produced in cooperation with the Statistics Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis.

IX. PUBLISHING ACTIVITIES

61. Given the broad and long-term impact that authoritative, institutional publications have on opinion and policy, publications continue to be a departmental priority, and special efforts are being made to promote their visibility and sale. And while the essential goal of each publication is to communicate the diverse array of actions and activities that the United Nations undertakes in meeting contemporary global challenges, these publications are now being very carefully differentiated to ensure that they avoid duplication and that their content and approach meets the needs and demands of their respective target audiences.

62. Important gains have been achieved by action on several fronts, including the deployment of advanced publishing technology; a more rigorous approach to formulating content and writing style; closer cooperation with substantive units, which helped sharpen each publication's message and content; a more streamlined editorial process through which different units can utilize the research already done by other parts of the Department; growing use of electronic publishing, which is significantly widening outreach and also helping reduce print runs of some publications distributed in developed countries; and greater use of internal reproduction facilities. This has become the key in

making the Department's publications more readable, timely and cost-effective. These gains have been instrumental in facilitating the Department's efforts to promote the visibility and sale of its publications in an intensely competitive market. One reflection of this success has been the recognition accorded the Blue Books Series, which won a prestigious award from the American Library Association just a year after they were launched, and which the influential journal Law Books in Review hailed by urging that "no scholar, student, foreign policy practitioner and regional historian should ignore this literature".

63. Development Business, whose merger last year with the World Bank's competing International Business Opportunities Service (IBOS) eliminated a duplicative effort within the United Nations system, has boosted its income through taking over IBOS subscriptions. This increased income will finance the development of a new electronic offshoot of Development Business. The new product will go online in early 1997 and is expected to attract a wider readership, thus increasing the dissemination of this important publication as well as generating revenues for the Organization. Similarly, Everyone's United Nations will now be a sales item, thus becoming a self-supporting, income-generating publication. The Yearbook of the United Nations continues to be supported and published by an outside publisher; and some of the titles of the scholarly Blue Books Series have been published by outside publishers in "popular" editions in Greek, Japanese and Russian.

64. The forthcoming publication of the third edition of The Blue Helmets will contribute to a better-informed public debate about United Nations peacekeeping. This comprehensive and unique reference work produced in cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and other concerned departments and offices, covers all United Nations peacekeeping missions through early 1996. The Blue Helmets assembles under one cover information about every aspect of United Nations peacekeeping available from no other single source. Its narrative summarizes key developments, Security Council action and reports by the Secretary-General and supplies documentary references. Particularly noteworthy are the publication's appendices, which provide a concise record of Security Council authorizations, details on costs and contributions by Member States - assessed, voluntary and in-kind - as well as the names and periods of service of senior officials in peacekeeping operations. As a reference work, the third edition of this publication goes beyond simply updating earlier editions.

65. Another recurrent periodical of the Department, Africa Recovery, has recently focused intensively on promoting both the mid-term review by the General Assembly of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and the recently launched System-Wide Special Initiative on Africa, which is designed to attain the objectives laid out in the New Agenda. Comprehensive press kits were prepared, in March and September, respectively, for the global launch of the Special Initiative and for the mid-term review, which generated a concerted worldwide media focus on African development, in no small part because of the supporting work done by United Nations information centres.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/51/21).

ANNEX

Major activities of the Department of Public Information in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/31 B (January-August 1996)

I. INSTITUTIONAL PUBLICATIONS

		DPI/Sales No.
1	"Confronting New Challenges: Annual Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization, 1995", released in Arabic, Chinese and Russian in January	1723 (95.I.47)
2	Yearbook of the United Nations, vol. 48 (1994), released in English in June	E.95.I.1
3	An Agenda for Development (book), translated and released into Armenian, Romanian and Russian by the United Nations Office at Yerevan, and the United Nations information centres at Bucharest and Moscow, respectively	1622/DEV
4	Basic Facts about the United Nations (book), released in French and Spanish in April and in Russian in June	1580 (95.I.31)
5	United Nations in Brief (booklet), released in Japanese by the United Nations information centre at Tokyo	1223/Rev.2
6	UN Chronicle (magazine), vol. XXXIII, No. 1, released in English in June	USPS 647-380
7	UNBIS-Plus on CD-ROM, 1996-1 released in English in May, and 1996-2 released in English in July	ISSN 1075-3877
8	UNBIS Thesaurus released in French and Spanish in January	ST/LIB/40/Rev.1 (95.I.33)
9	Index to Proceedings of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, released in English in January and in Chinese in May	ST/LIB/SER.B/A.51 (96.I.12)
10	Index to Proceedings of the Security Council, Fiftieth year, released in English in May	ST/LIB/SER.B/S.32 (96.I.16)
11	Index to Proceedings of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, released in English in July	ST/LIB/SER.B/E.72 (96.I.23)
12	"United Nations, 1994-1995: A Bibliography", four parts: United Nations Reform, Security Council, Charter of the United Nations, and Peacekeeping Operations, released in English in April	DHL/USS/ECRD/BIB/1

		DPI/Sales No.
	II. BLUE BOOKS SERIES	
1	"The United Nations and Somalia, 1992-1996", released in English in January and in French in June	1677 (96.I.8)
2	"The United Nations and the Iraq-Kuwait Conflict, 1990-1996", released in English in February, in Arabic in July, and in French in August	1770 (96.I.3)
3	"The United Nations and Human Rights, 1945-1995", released in Spanish in February	1676 (95.I.21)
4	"The United Nations and the Advancement of Women, 1945-1995", revised edition, released in English in April	1804 (96.I.9)
5	"The United Nations and Rwanda, 1993-1996", released in English in June	1678 (96.I.20)
6	The following mini-Blue Books were released in May in Russian by the United Nations information centre at Moscow: "The United Nations and Apartheid, 1948-1994" and "The United Nations and Cambodia, 1991-1995"	
	III. PUBLICATIONS ON THEMATIC ISSUES	
	A. Advancement of women	
1	Fourth World Conference on Women - Platform for Action and the Beijing Declaration (book), released in English in March. Issued in January as A/CONF.177/20 in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish	1766/WOM
2	"Fourth World Conference on Women - Platform for Action Summary" (brochure), released in French and Spanish in March	1762/WOM
3	"CEDAW to hold its 15th session in New York, 15 January-2 February 1996" (briefing paper), released in English in January	1773/WOM
4	"Women in the United Nations: Approaching Critical Mass" (backgrounder), released in English in March	1785/WOM
5	"UN Action for Women" (backgrounder), released in English in February	1796/WOM
6	"Focus on Women - UN Action for Women" (feature article), released in English in May and in French and Spanish in June	1796/WOM/Rev.1
7	"Focus on Women: After the Beijing Conference, Movement for Equality is Still Alive" (feature article), released in English in April	1809/WOM

		DPI/Sales No.
	B. Economic and social development	
1	Development Update (bimonthly newsletter), Nos. 13-16, released in English	1452
2	Development Business (bimonthly periodical), Nos. 431-446, released in English	
3	"World Economic and Social Survey 1996" (press release), released in English and French in June	1828/ECOSOC
4	The United Nations and Crime Prevention: Seeking Security and Justice for All (book), released in English in June	1143/Rev.2/CRM (96.IV.9)
5	International Year for the Eradication of Poverty, 1996 (information kit), with seven background/feature articles, released in English, French and Spanish in June	1807/POV
6	Briefing papers on the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development:	
	(a) "Action 95: Commission on Sustainable Development", released in French and Spanish in January	1745/SD
	(b) "United Nations Panel on Forests Aims to Ensure Survival of World's Forests", released in English in March	1802/SD
	(c) "United Nations Panel on Forests concludes Second Session: Stresses Meeting Human Needs without Destroying Forests", released in English in March	SD/1808
	(d) "Youth to Speak on Environmental Work at High-Level United Nations Commission", released in English in April	SD/1811
	(e) "United Nations Commission on Earth Summit Discusses Forum on Oceans and Eco-Efficient Transportation", released in English in April	SD/1812
7	World Summit for Social Development - the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action (book), released in French in June	1707/SOC/CON
8	"Habitat II - The City Summit" (information kit), with 10 background/feature articles, released in English, French and Spanish in May	1760
9	"Habitat II - The City Summit" (poster), released in the six official languages in January	1747/HAB/CON
10	"Habitat II: Some Facts about the City Summit" (briefing paper), released in English in May	1824
11	Public Administration and Development (information kit), with six background/feature articles, released in English and French in April	1793/PUB/ADM

		DPI/Sales No.
12	Public Sector Reform and Public Administration (briefing papers and backgrounders) released in English between January and March:	
	(a) "United Nations Conference on Public Sector Reform in Eastern and Central Europe"	1786
	(b) "Conference on Public Sector Reform in Eastern and Central Europe begins in Berlin"	1792
	(c) "United Nations Seminar on the Role of Public Administration in Infrastructure Development and Environmental Protection"	1801
	(d) "United Nations Seminar on Restoring Government Administrative Machinery in Situations of Conflict"	1803
	(e) "Regional United Nations Conference on the Role of Public Administration in Promoting Economic Development in Asia"	1805

C. Africa recovery/special initiative on Africa

1	Africa Recovery (quarterly periodical), vol. 10, No. 1, released in English and French in June	
2	"United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa" (information kit), with six backgrounders released in English and French in March	1799

D. Peace and security

1	"United Nations Peacekeeping Operations" (information package), released in English in March and in English and French in August	1634/PKO/Rev.2, and Rev.3
2	"United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES)" (information package), released in English in May	1823
3	"The United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) - End of Mission Summary" (briefing paper), released in English in June	
4	"The United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH)" (briefing paper), released in English in June	

		DPI/Sales No.
	E. Human rights	
1	"The Challenge of Human Rights and Cultural Diversity" (backgrounder), released in Arabic, Chinese and Russian in February	1627/HR
2	"Children's Rights" (backgrounder), released in English, French and Spanish in January	1765/HR
3	"Women and Violence" (backgrounder), released in English, French and Spanish in February	1772/HR
4	"The United Nations and Human Rights" brochure, released in English, French and Spanish in July	1774/HR
	F. Fact sheets on the work of the United Nations	
1	"Setting the record straight: some facts about the United Nations", released in English between February and May	1753 and Rev.2-5
2	"The United Nations: protecting the global environment", released in English in March and July	1814 and Rev.1-2
3	"The United Nations financial crisis at a glance", released in English between May and August	1815 and Rev.1-4
4	"DPI: achieving still more with less", released in English in May	1817
5	"Why business should support the United Nations", released in English in May and in July as "The United Nations and business: a global partnership"	1820 and Rev.1
6	"United Nations conferences: what do they accomplish?", released in English in May and July	1825 and Rev.1

IV. BRIEFINGS FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

1 "The global problem of landmines", 11 January

2 "The International Year for the Eradication of Poverty (1996)", 18 January

3 "United Nations peacekeeping operations: towards a rapid reaction capability for the United Nations", 25 January

4 "The United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)", 1 February

5 "The current role of the United Nations in the former Yugoslavia", 22 February

6 "The fiftieth session of the General Assembly: a report on the five main working groups designed to strengthen the United Nations", 29 February

7 "Celebrating the past, planning for the future", commemoration of International Women's Day, 7 March

8 "The United Nations financial situation", 14 March

9 "Water for thirsty cities", commemoration of International Water Day, 21 March

10 "A new initiative for Africa", 28 March

11 "Healthy cities for better life", commemoration of World Health Day, 4 April

12 "Report of the fortieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women", 11 April

13 "United Nations University - role and activities", 18 April

14 "The tenth anniversary of Chernobyl", 25 April

15 "The fiftieth session of the General Assembly", 2 May

16 "Inhumane weapons review conference: land mines protocol", 9 May

17 "Towards greater respect for human rights of children", 16 May

18 "Report of fourth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development", 23 May

19 "International Conference on Migration", 30 May

20 "International Day to Combat Desertification and Drought", 6 June

21 "World Food Summit", 13 June

V. VIDEO PRODUCTIONS

1 "Defying the Odds", a video documentary on women's role in social change, released in Arabic, English, French and Spanish between March and August

2 "Child of One Earth", a video montage of a poem about the United Nations, released in English and French in June

3 "Landmines", a seven-minute video on the menace of landmines, released in English

4 Three 30-second television spots on Habitat II in six languages, human needs (English) and health (English), released between May and June

5 "UN in Action", 37 three-to-five-minute video news magazines (Nos. 428-464) released in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish between January and August

6 "World Chronicle", 19 30-minute panel talk shows (Nos. 615-633), released in English between January and August

VI. SPECIAL RADIO FEATURE PROGRAMMES/SERIES

1 Eight radio feature programmes on the activities and achievements of the United Nations in the areas of peacekeeping and peace-building, produced in eight languages

2 Fifty-seven special radio reports on peacekeeping activities of the United Nations, produced in Arabic, English, French and Spanish

3 One special radio programme relating to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, produced in Arabic, English and French

4 Ten radio feature programmes on human rights issues, produced in Arabic, English, French and Spanish

5 Four-part radio documentary programme on indigenous peoples, produced in English and adapted into nine other languages

6 Series of 35 weekly radio programmes on the advancement of women, released in English

7 Series of eight radio programmes on the advancement of women, produced in Arabic, French and Spanish

8 Eight radio programmes on issues relating to sustainable development, produced in English, French and Spanish

9 Series of 36 documentary radio programmes on population growth and development needs, released in English, French and Spanish, and adapted into Hindi and Kiswahili

10 Seven radio programmes on the system-wide Special Initiative on Africa, produced in English, French and Kiswahili

11 Special four-part documentary radio programme on the themes of human settlements, produced in English in May, and adapted into 11 other languages

12 A total of 369 reports on Habitat II were fed from the conference site to radio organizations worldwide in English, French and Spanish

		Quantity
	VII. OTHER MAJOR ACTIVITIES	
1	Press releases, produced in English and French	2 386
2	Radio news magazines, produced in the official and nine other languages	611
3	Radio features/regional news magazines, produced in the official and nine other languages	549
4	"World in Review", radio programmes and updates, produced and distributed in English	52
5	Radio telephone feeds transmitted in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese	1 735
6	Audio cassettes and taped radio programmes distributed	11 844
7	Edited television news packages, produced and distributed	289
8	Photos of meetings and events, produced and distributed	9 738
9	Requests met from the photo library	1 351
10	United Nations photos downloaded from the United Nations "home page" on the Internet	526 621
11	Permanent accreditation of correspondents processed at Headquarters	1 231
12	Temporary accreditation of correspondents processed at Headquarters	2 418

		Quantity
13	Accreditation of correspondents processed for the ninth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and for Habitat II	4 077
14	Participants in guided tours at Headquarters	242 019
15	Requests for recordings from the audio library (open reels and cassettes) for production purposes	11 844
16	Requests met for recordings from the visual library	301
17	Requests met for television material and copies of tapes	2 411
18	Requests met for video tape dubbing	569
19	Bookings of studios and other United Nations Television access facilities (for Department of Public Information productions and services to correspondents)	1 407
20	Titles of publications/documents transmitted electronically to users worldwide	7 211
21	News items transmitted exclusively for news agencies of developing countries	622
22	Applications for new accreditation of non-governmental organizations processed	134
23	Visitors to the NGO Resource Centre	1 839
24	Group briefings organized by the Group Programme Unit	710
25	Queries from the public answered by the Public Inquiries Unit at Headquarters	22 387
26	Reference queries answered by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library	45 435
27	Loans processed by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library (number of pieces)	51 788
28	Exchange arrangements by Dag Hammarskjöld Library with institutions worldwide	1 227
29	Materials photocopied for Dag Hammarskjöld Library users (number of pages)	478 931
30	Acquisitions of United Nations system archival material and external publications (number of items)	182 656
31	Electronic resources available in the Dag Hammarskjöld Library (number of databases)	95
32	Records added to the Dag Hammarskjöld Library's on-line database UNBIS	40 723